

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 and 22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 4 and 10 are amended to address inadvertent errors and grammar.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments only address grammar issues and correct errors; (c) do not present any additional claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims are Patentable over the Applied References

The Office Action rejects claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,438,433 to Reifman et al. (Reifman) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,417,934 to Sadr-Salek. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Regarding independent claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16, the applied references fail to result in:

(1) "a terminal connected to a network and configured to enable a user to create (a) instructions (i) identifying a location of document data to be processed and (ii) identifying plural service processes to be executed on the document data, and (b) a correspondence relation associating a specific event and one or more of the instructions that are to be processed when the specific event occurs", as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16;

(2) "an identifying unit connected to the network that receives a notification from at least one of the plural service processing apparatuses that the specific event has occurred, and that identifies the one or more of the instructions corresponding to the specific event based on

the notification that the specific event has occurred and on the basis of the correspondence relation", as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16;

(3) "a cooperative processing unit that makes two or more of the plural service processing apparatuses cooperatively execute the plural service processes on the document data on the basis of the interpreted one or more of the instructions", as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claim 4; and

(4) "a sending unit that sends the identified one or more of the instructions to two or more cooperative processing apparatus that cooperatively execute the plural service processes on the document data", as recited in claim 7 and similarly recited in claims 10, 13 and 16.

Reifman discloses an intelligent fax machine (IFAX) 10. If two or more IFAX 10s are coupled, they can balance their workloads when the number of outgoing facsimile messages exceeds a predetermined threshold in either IFAX 10.

The Office Action: (a) cites to the network of IFAX 10s as allegedly corresponding to the claimed plural service processing apparatuses; (b) cites to col. 39, lines 39-65 as allegedly disclosing a cooperative processing unit (the cited section discusses the load balancing process of an IFAX machine); and (c) cites to col. 10, lines 13-24 as allegedly disclosing (i) the claimed identification unit and (ii) the claimed interrupting unit. The cited section describes a mailbox option in which a user can view received facsimile messages in inbox 70 and can edit facsimile messages in the outbox 72.

Regarding feature (1) quoted above, the Office Action cites to Reifman as disclosing the load balancing feature of the IFAX 10 machine. In Reifman, when two IFAX 10s are "coupled" together, they can load balance their facsimile sending loads. Specifically, if a first IFAX 10 has more than five facsimile messages to send, the first IFAX 10 can send a load transfer request to a second IFAX 10 (Fig. 113). Thus, the second IFAX 10 receives a facsimile message and the destination for the facsimile message, and sends the facsimile

message. Reifman does not disclose that a user creates the instructions to do the load balancing and further does not disclose that the user sets up a correspondence between a specific event (such as an IFAX 10 having greater than five facsimiles to send out) and the process instructions to be executed in this event. Instead, one of ordinary skill in the art would have understood this correspondence to be programmed into an IFAX 10 at manufacture. Thus, Reifman fails to disclose feature (1) quoted above.

Regarding feature (2) quoted above, Reifman fails to disclose the identifying unit because col. 10, lines 13-24, cited by the Office Action as disclosing this feature, merely discloses the mailbox option that allows a user to view a received facsimile message. The cited section does not disclose any element that receives notification of a specific event from a service processing unit and that identifies one or more instructions corresponding to the specific event based on the notification, as claimed.

During load balancing, a second IFAX 10 may receive a load transfer request from a first IFAX 10. While the first IFAX 10 thus notifies the second IFAX 10 of the occurrence of an event (that the first IFAX 10 has more than five outgoing facsimile messages), the second IFAX 10 does not itself identify any processing to perform based on a correspondence relation as claimed. Instead, the second IFAX 10 only receives a facsimile message along with the instructions to transmit the message to a recipient. The second IFAX 10 does not have access to the original programming in the first IFAX 10 that associates the specific event with the programming to request a load transfer. Thus, Reifman fails to disclose an identity unit that receives a notification from at least one of the plural service processing apparatuses that identifies one or more of the instructions corresponding to the specific event based on the correspondence relation as claimed.

Regarding features (3) and (4) quoted above, the Office Action cites to col. 39, lines 39-65 and col. 64, lines 61-68 in alleging Reifman discloses a cooperative processing unit and

a sending unit as claimed. However, first, col. 39, lines 39-65 discloses that a user can specify load balancing for an IFAX 10 by pressing "fax load balancing" display location 450 (Fig. 67). This merely changes the load balancing option for one IFAX 10 and does not correspond to controlling two or more service processing apparatus to cooperatively execute plural service processes on the basis of the interpreted one or more instructions and does not correspond to sending identified instructions to two or more cooperative processing apparatus that cooperatively execute plural service processes on document data, as claimed.

Second, when a display location 450 is pressed, as disclosed in the section cited by the Office Action, there is not yet any interpreted instructions to base any processing as in feature (3) quoted above, and there is not yet any identified instructions to be sent to two or more cooperative process apparatus to cooperatively execute plural service processes as recited in feature (4) quoted above. Third, at col. 64, lines 61-68, Reifman merely discloses that a user can set the list of IFAX 10s that a given IFAX 10 can attempt load balancing with. This does not correspond to the claimed cooperative processing unit because the user is not part of Reifman's apparatus and does not correspond to the claimed sending unit because the user and the list created by the user do not send anything.

The Office Action cites to Sadr-Salek at col. 3, lines 40-42 as disclosing remote control of facsimile servers. While the cited section discloses remote control, it does not disclose any cooperative processing between plural service processing apparatuses. Thus, Sadr-Salek fails to cure the deficiencies of Reifman.

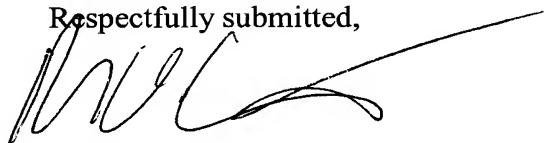
For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-20 and 22 are patentable over the applied references.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 8, 2009

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